

Application No. 10/003,767
Amendment "B" dated April 25, 2006
Reply to Office Action mailed January 25, 2006

REMARKS

The non-final Office Action of January 25, 2006 considered and rejected claims 1-29 and 31-39. Claims 1-3, 5-9, 13-18, 24-29, 31-36, 38 and 39 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Wong et al. "A Role-Based Access Control Model for XML Repositories (hereinafter "Wong"). Claims 4, 10-12 and 19-23 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Wong in view of Official Notice taken by the Examiner. Claim 37 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Wong in view of Chapter 11 of "Stallings Cryptography and Network Security".¹

In addition, the disclosure was objected to because of a minor grammatical informality. As reflected in the above Amendments to the Specification, the informality has now been corrected, and Applicants respectfully submit that this objection is now moot.

By this paper, claims 1, 2, 5, 6, 9, 31, 34 and 36-38 have been amended, new claim 40 has been added, and no claims have been cancelled.² Accordingly, following this paper, claims 1-29 and 31-40 remain pending, of which claims 1, 31, 34 and 36 are the only independent claims at issue.

Applicants' invention generally relates to authorizing a user to operate on different types of data structures in a standard manner. As recited in claim 1, for example, a method includes maintaining a plurality of role templates that define basic access permissions for one or more command methods. The access permissions are defined by the role templates in a manner that is independent of the type of data structure being accessed. In addition, and as clarified by the above amendments, the role templates are contained within one or more role map documents that are each specific to a particular service. Further, a plurality of role definitions are maintained

¹ Although the prior art status and some of the assertions made with regard to the cited art is not being challenged at this time, Applicants reserve the right to challenge the prior art status and assertions made with regard to the cited art, as well as any official notice, at any appropriate time in the future, should the need arise, such as, for example in a subsequent amendment or during prosecution of a related application. Accordingly, Applicants' decision not to respond to any particular assertions or rejections in this paper should not be construed as Applicants acquiescing to said assertions or rejections.

² Various amendments have been made merely to provide clarity to the claimed invention (see, e.g. claims 2, 5, 9 and 37) and not for any reason related to patentability. Support for these amendments as well as other amendments and the new claims is found within the disclosure of Applicants' specification including at least the disclosure found in paragraphs [0009], [0040], [0064], [0069], [0073] and [0075], as well as in the drawings, including Figure 3, of the originally filed application.

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which define access permissions for requesting entities by using one or more of the role templates, and a request from the requesting entity is received so as to perform at least one of the command methods. Moreover, a role definition corresponding to the requesting entity is identified, and access permissions for the requesting entity are determined with respect to the command method by using the role definition corresponding to the requesting entity. Optionally, one or more role list documents may be maintained which contain all of the role definitions for requesting entities that may attempt to access data structures belonging to an identity, and each are specific to a particular requesting entity (claim 40).

Applicants' invention, as claimed in independent method claim 31, is related to the foregoing method, and includes similar recitations, but is recited in functional (step for) language, while the invention as claimed in independent claim 34, recites a computer program product having physical computer-readable media storing computer-executable instructions for performing acts generally corresponding to the acts recited in claim 1. Applicants' invention, as claimed for example in independent claim 36, is directed to a corresponding system which generally implements the method of claim 1.

In each of the independent claims, it is clearly recited that a role template defining access permissions with respect to one or more command methods is included within a role map document that is specific to a particular service, as recited in combination with the other recited claim elements. For at least this reason, it is clear that Wong fails to anticipate or make obvious the claimed invention, either singly or in combination with the other art of record. In particular, Wong fails to teach or suggest role map documents which contain role templates and which are service specific, as recited in combination with the other recited claim elements.

More particularly, Wong discloses an XML-based system for defining user roles and thereby determining access permissions of the users with respect to various documents. Specifically, Wong teaches the use and maintenance of an RBXAC_xml file which maintains, among other features, a list of users and a role tree. (pp. 143-44). In the list of users, each system user is identified by a unique ID and an optional RolePointer which identifies a "role" of which the user is a member. (p. 144). Each role is, in turn, stored within the role tree in the RBXAC_xml document. (p. 144). The role tree provides a hierarchical arrangement of roles

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which define the name of each role and an identification of the functions available to a user having membership in the role. (pp. 141, 144).

Accordingly, Wong teaches the use of an XML file to maintain various roles defining access permissions of system users, and the storage of the various roles within a role tree which is itself housed within the RBXAC_xml document. Wong fails, however, to teach or even suggest any service for which a role tree or RBXAC_xml document may be specific. In fact, the single example presented in Wong teaches that the RBXAC_xml and role tree are instead specific to an entire University, rather than to a particular service as claimed in combination with the other recited claim elements. (p. 144). Accordingly, the use of a single document and its included role tree for all users within the University, and apparently for all services accessible to the users, teaches away from and is in fact contrary to the teachings as claimed, in which a role map that contains the plurality of role templates is specific to a particular service.

In view of the foregoing, Applicants respectfully submit that the other rejections to the claims are now moot and do not, therefore, need to be addressed individually at this time.³ It will be appreciated, however, that this should not be construed as Applicants acquiescing to any of the purported teachings or assertions made in the last action regarding the cited art or the pending application, including any official notice. Instead, Applicants reserve the right to challenge any of the purported teachings or assertions made in the last action, including any official notice, at any appropriate time in the future, should the need arise.

³ Nevertheless, for the record, Applicants note with respect to claim 18, that Wong also fails to teach or suggest wherein one or more command methods includes a query command, as claimed in combination with the other recited elements. In particular, Wong discloses only that a user may query an XML database to obtain a list of a user's role memberships (p. 142), but fails to teach or suggest that the command methods the subject of basic access permissions in the role template, include a query command.

With respect to claim 6, Applicants respectfully submit that Wong fails to teach or suggest wherein one or more scopes describing views on a data structure are defined, and particularly wherein the one or more scopes being defined are independent of the plurality of templates and further associating a method type with one of the one or more scopes.

With respect to claim 38, Applicants submit that Wong fails to teach or suggest maintaining one or more refined scopes independent of the role template and at the user level.

With respect to claim 40, Applicants respectfully submit that Wong fails to teach or suggest, whether alone or in combination with the other art of record, wherein one or more role list documents are specific to a particular requesting entity. In fact, Wong appears to teach away from role lists which are specific to a particular requesting entity inasmuch as Wong defines a single file which contains the listing of all users.

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In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that all claims should now be found in condition for prompt allowance over the cited references. In the event that the Examiner finds any remaining impediment to a prompt allowance of this application that may be clarified through a telephone interview, the Examiner is requested to contact the undersigned attorney.

Dated this 25th day of April, 2006.

Respectfully submitted,



RICK D. NYDEGGER
Registration No. 28,651
JENS C. JENKINS
Registration No. 44,803
Attorneys for Applicant
Customer No. 47973

RDN:JCJ:CCN:ppa
CN0000000128V001